

Probers to Visit 3 State Prisons

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Washington

A nine-member House subcommittee looking into the problems facing the nation's prisons will visit at least three California institutions beginning October 21, Representative Robert W. Kastenmeier (Dem-Wis.) announced today.

Kastenmeier said the members of the House panel would visit the Soledad prison, San Quentin and Santa Rita rehabilitation center.

After visiting the prisons and a "halfway house"—the Oakland Community Treatment Center—the panel plans to hold public hearings October 25 at the Federal Building courthouse in San Francisco.

"One reason why we have chosen to make this visit is the reputed excellence of the

California State system," Kastenmeier said in announcing the trip.

STUDY

The Wisconsin Democrat said the California visit would be a part of "an intensive, long-term study" of the problems of both those who run the prisons and those incarcerated in them.

Despite Kastenmeier's comment about the "reputed excellence" of the California prison system, the announcement noted that a federal judge had recently ruled that imprisonment at Santa Rita—an Alameda county jail—constituted "cruel and unusual punishment" under the 8th Amendment.

Witnesses scheduled to testify at the October 25 hearing include Raymond Procnier,

director of the California Department of Corrections, and Moe Camacho, president of the California Correctional Officers Association.

OTHERS

Other witnesses will include Fay Stender, attorney for George Jackson, one of the "Soledad brothers" who was killed during an alleged escape attempt.

Kastenmeier, chairman of subcommittee No. 3 of the House judiciary committee, said other members of the panel expected to go to California include Representatives John Conyers Jr. (Dem-Mich.); William F. Ryan, (Dem-N.Y.); Abner Mikva, (Dem-Ill.); Robert Drinan, (Dem-Mass.); Tom Railsback, (Rep-Ill.); Edward G. Biester, (Rep-Pa.); Hamilton Fish Jr., (Rep-N.Y.), and Lawrence Coughlin, (Rep-Pa.).

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